

Message Text

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41

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20 USIA-15 DRC-01

SAM-01 /102 W

----- 084462

R 281530Z JUN 74

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9315

INFO SECDEF

CINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

16TH AF

COMNAVACTS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MADRID 4115

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, SP

SUBJ: USAF COMMANDER HAS AUDIENCE WITH FRANCO

REF: 16TH AF 251545Z JUN 74 (NOTAL)

1. AT INITIATIVE OF GOS, MAJ. GEN. SALVADOR FELICES, VICE COMMANDER OF 16TH AF AT TORREJON, WAS INVITED TO APPEAR AT PARDO PALACE JUNE 25

FOR AUDIENCE WITH FRANCO. AUDIENCE WITH FELICES WAS ONE OF NUMBER GRANTED REGULARLY EACH TUESDAY BY CAUDILLO TO MOSTLY SPANISH MILITARY OFFICERS. INTERVIEW OF FELICES WITH FRANCO WAS FILMED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY SPANISH MEDIA, WITH PHOTOS APPEARING IN AT LEAST ONE MADRID

PAPER.

2. ACCORDING TO FELICES, FRANCO SEEMED TO BE IN EXCELLENT HEALTH, THOUGH HE LOOKED HIS 82 YEARS. WITH EXCEPTION OF FRANCO'S EXPRESSION OF GRATITUDE FOR US TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO SPAIN, CONVERSATION WAS NON-SUBSTANTIVE. FRANCO, HOWEVER, DID ASK SPANISH
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AF GENERAL WHO ACCOMPANIED FELICES AT INTERVIEW ABOUT STATE OF

RELATIONS BETWEEN SPANISH AND US AIR FORCE AND RECEIVED REPLY
THAT THEY COULDN'T BE BETTER. ENTIRE AUDIENCE LASTED ABOUT 15 MINUTES

3. WHILE SPANISH OFFICIALS GIVE NO EXPLANATION WHY FELICES INVITED
TO AUDIENCE AT THIS TIME, PRESS REPORTS OF VISIT IN NEWSPAPERS
EXPLAINED THAT FRANCO HAD RECEIVED HIM BECAUSE OF HIS FORTHCOMING
REASSIGNMENT.

4. COMMENT: THIS IS FIRST OCCASION OF WHICH WE AWARE THAT 16TH AF
COMMANDER HAS BEEN INVITED TO CALL FORMALLY ON FRANCO. ACCORDING
TO SOURCE IN FRANCO'S MILITARY HOUSEHOLD, AIR MINISTRY REQUESTED
APPOINTMENT FOR FELICES. FORMER AIR MINISTER GENERAL JULIO
SALVADOR, WHO HAS BEEN CLOSE PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATE
OF FELICES, APPARENTLY PLAYED MAIN ROLE IN WORKING OUT APPOINTMENT.
AUDIENCE COULD BE VIEWED AS TIMELY GESTURE OF RECOGNITION AND
SUPPORT BY FRANCO FOR US MILITARY PRESENCE IN SPAIN ON EVE OF
NEGOTIATIONS FOR RENEWAL OF BASES AGREEMENT.
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